



## Envision Arlington Standing Committee

Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Time: 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Attendees: Johanna Meyer, Juli Brazile, Jagat Adhiya, Caroline Murray, Michael Brownstein

Guests: Lenard Diggins

### Minutes

#### 1. Minutes Approval

Postponed to January 2024 Meeting

#### 2. 2024 Town Survey Discussion

##### Overview:

- Detailed discussion on the survey design and logic.
- Considerations about survey questions, skip logic, and layout.
- Decision to simplify the survey by removing complex logic.
- Discussions on specific survey questions related to town governance, energy, and recycling.
- Suggestions to make the survey more user-friendly and efficient.

##### Survey Design and Logic:

- Detailed discussion on survey questions related to Mass Save recommendations and their implementation.
- Consideration of positive and negative options in the survey and how to phrase questions to accommodate both scenarios.
- The need for an option like 'NA' or 'none' for some questions was agreed upon.

##### Specific Survey Questions:

- Discussion on phrasing questions to be inclusive of all respondents' actions (whether they implemented recommendations or not).
- The need to rephrase questions to be less negative and more inviting for respondents.
- *Survey on Recycling, Composting, and Other Services*: Discussion on questions related to textiles recycling, mattress recycling, composting, and visitor center usage.

- *Feedback on Economic Development Questions*: Discussion on the structure of questions regarding Arlington's attractions and strengths; Suggestions on allowing respondents to choose multiple options or provide open-ended answers.
- *Parking Benefits District Fund*: Conversation about the parking benefits district fund and how to clearly communicate its purpose in the survey; Discussion on the terminology used in the survey and the need for it to be understandable by the general public.
- *Survey Questions Adjustment*: Discussion on possibly dropping certain survey questions for brevity; Focus on maintaining the standard for education questions consistent with the previous year.
- *Survey Questions on Shopping Habits*: Discussion on questions related to changes in shopping habits due to the pandemic; Focus on online shopping trends and supporting local businesses.
- *Parking Meters and Beautification*: Extensive discussion on questions related to the creation of parking meter districts in Arlington Heights and East Arlington for funding beautification and storefront improvements; Consideration of making the question concise and clear for respondents.
- *Human Rights Commission Questions*: Discussion on including questions from the Human Rights Commission about welcoming and belonging in Arlington; Emphasis on longitudinal data collection and repeating certain questions every few years for consistency.
- *Survey Question Focus*: Emphasis on what people think the town government should be doing; Concern about overlapping questions and the need for specificity in asking about neighborhoods vs. town government.
- *Survey Question Clarity*: Discussion on rephrasing questions to differentiate between town government and neighborhoods; Consideration of combining questions for a composite answer but concerns about clarity were raised.
- *Discussion on Terms of 'Welcoming' and 'Belonging'*: Debate on the use of terms like 'welcoming' and 'belonging' in survey questions; Suggestion to focus more on town government feedback than neighborhood feedback; Discussion on including questions about diversity in local government and schools; The idea of focusing on town government's efforts in supporting diversity; Consideration of town government's role in integration and community connection.
- *Prioritization of Survey Questions*: Discussion on the importance of each survey question and the possibility of removing certain questions for brevity; Suggestion to focus on key areas like energy, tourism, education, equity, recycling, and composting.
- *Technical Aspects of Survey*: Discussion on the technical aspects of the survey, such as submission requirements and format.
- *Additional Survey Questions*: Proposal for adding questions regarding town day and override; Decision to review these additional questions in context before inclusion.
- *Survey Sections*: Energy: Identified as a key section in the survey; Tourism: Discussed as a shorthand for the parking benefit district and related questions..

- *Survey Length and Complexity*: Acknowledged the need for a balance between detailed questions and survey length; Considered whether to consolidate questions but noted the risk of making questions too complex.
- *Chamber of Commerce Questions*: Discussed the inclusion of questions from the Chamber of Commerce and the need to finalize these.
- *Survey Participation and Feedback*: Discussed strategies for increasing survey participation and the potential use of controversial questions to engage respondents.
- *Contact Information Collection*: Debated whether to ask for participants' names and contact information; Discussed the possibility of replacing this with a general email for further discussions.
- *Override Question*: Proposed including questions about town override votes, caution was advised about this approach, especially considering the survey's anonymity and the inclusion of non-voters.
- *Task Group Recruitment*: Proposed adding a question for recruiting members for various task groups based on survey responses.
- *Final Survey Review*: Agreed to send the revised survey for final testing and comments; Discussed using Power BI integration with SurveyMonkey for data analysis.

#### **Action Items:**

1. Integrate feedback to refine and finalize survey questions, ensuring clarity, conciseness, and differentiation between town government and neighborhood aspects.
2. Explore past surveys, especially those related to overrides, for insights to inform current survey questions.
3. Include task group recruitment questions in the survey and prepare for testing.
4. Coordinate with relevant committees and groups, including the Chamber of Commerce and the Human Rights Commission, for input on the survey content.
5. Focus on key survey areas, removing less critical questions to enhance brevity and respondent engagement.
6. Ensure technical aspects of the survey are properly addressed, including submission format, question layout, and display issues.
7. Utilize AI tools for transcription and summarization of meetings to aid in survey development.
8. Review proposed questions from external sources, determining their relevance and potential inclusion in the survey.
9. Clarify specific survey sections or questions, such as parking benefits district fund and beautification projects, to enhance understanding.
10. Reevaluate and refine specific survey sections, like recycling, composting, and economic development questions, for positive engagement and accessibility.
11. Plan for follow-up discussions and actions based on feedback from the Civic Engagement Group and other stakeholders.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:15 pm

**Next Meeting:** January 2024 (TBD)